MHRA
Modern Humanities Research Association

Review
Author(s): Raymond Furness
Review by: Raymond Furness
Source: *The Modern Language Review*, Vol. 71, No. 2 (Apr., 1976), pp. 475-476
Published by: Modern Humanities Research Association
Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/3724887
Accessed: 29-01-2016 12:40 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Modern Humanities Research Association is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Modern Language Review*.

http://www.jstor.org

This content downloaded from 128.6.218.72 on Fri, 29 Jan 2016 12:40:07 UTC
All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions

role in some society of the future, attitudes which find their ultimate expression in the *Henri Quatre* novels. Here, and in the essays on his attitude to France and the concept of Europe, Mann's thought emerges as a confused and at times confusing amalgam of historical anachronism, optimism, and naïvety, giving support to Golo Mann's contention: 'Thomas Mann war ein tieferer Denker als sein Bruder Heinrich. Dieser hielt den Gedanken an, wo es ihm paßte; jener dachte fort und fort und scheute auch vor der quälendsten Wahrheit nicht zurück.'

There are two respects in which Klaus Matthias unfortunately appears to have exceeded the customary bounds of editorial discretion in his otherwise excellent editing of *Heinrich Mann 1871/1971*. In permitting his own discussion of 'Heinrich Mann und die Musik' to swell to 130 pages and occupy over a quarter of the whole volume, he has unduly displaced all the other contributions to the conference. Such expatiation is justified neither by the relative importance of the subject nor by Matthias's treatment of it, which unfolds at some length general and often extrinsic matters such as the difference between Heinrich and Thomas Mann's conception of music, the Nietzschean background to the subject, the debatable authorship of the essay 'Wagner und Liszt' (usually attributed to Heinrich Mann) and the development of a sociology of music with which Mann is hardly at all associated. The catch-all title of this monograph-in-disguise indicates insufficient attention to the fact that it is really only Mann's aesthetic exploitation of music, both structurally and thematically, and not the quality of his thoughts on the subject, that could make such an extended exploration appear warrantable. As it is, lacking an adequate and central analysis of the literary results, the survey veers too easily towards a directionless accumulation of material.

The second charge that must needs be levelled at the editor of this volume also relates to an undue measure of self-indulgence. The Heinrich Mann conference at Lübeck was at the time made the target of a certain amount of left-wing provocation and rather predictable criticism (often made before the event) and it also received, Matthias feels, an unfair press coverage. Notwithstanding this, Matthias's lengthy diatribe against the cultural climate of the New Left and his polemics against various other personal *bêtes noires* in his over-defensive afterword (a further 60 pages from the editor!) are misplaced. On the whole, the essays printed here easily refute the charges made against the 'Heinrich–Mann–Tagung', and it is a pity that the editor is unwilling to allow his collaborators' work to speak for itself.

London J. J. White

The Era of German Expressionism. Edited by Paul Raabe. Translated by J. M. Ritchie. London: Calder & Boyars. 1974. 423 pp. £6.95.

This book was first published in German by the Olten Verlag in 1965, and consists of forty-five short essays of varying import, all dealing with different aspects of German Expressionism. The accounts range from a description of pre-war attitudes and the atmosphere in Berlin around 1910, through the literary scene in Prague, Leipzig, Munich, Heidelberg, Bonn, and Strasbourg to the impact of Dada and the Berlin revolution. Some are ephemeral and trivial, having merely anecdotal interest ('The sun is shining on the Kurfürstendamm . . .', 'It was at the beginning of February, 1911, about two in the morning when my husband woke me . . .', 'Let me push aside the curtains once more . . .'); others are of a more substantial kind. All provide a fascinating kaleidoscope pattern of the unique flavour of the times; the thumbnail sketches of Walden, Pfemfert, Hasenclever, Becher, Mynona, and a host of others, the portrayal of the antics in Zurich, the meditations of Kurt Wolff on publishing and meeting new writers — all convey a sense of energy,

This content downloaded from 128.6.218.72 on Fri, 29 Jan 2016 12:40:07 UTC
All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions

urgency, and hectic enthusiasm. The book's appendix, over one hundred pages of it, consists of a most informative textual commentary and a biographical index: Paul Raabe has excelled himself here. Dates of writing and of publication, plus indications of subsequent printings or variants are given, as are parallel passages from other sources if they have anything additional to add to the passage concerned. A list of all persons mentioned in the book, with brief comments on each name, has also been compiled. This biographical index contains much useful information, although to claim that Busoni is 'a creator of expressionist music' is rather too sketchy, and to describe Däubler as being a 'Representative poet of Expressionism' is certainly questionable. But all credit must go to Professor Ritchie for tackling the translation practically single-handed: he has brilliantly captured the original flavour of flippant, nervous modernism (the world of the squawkbox, shimmy, and lounge lizard) as well as managing to translate the absurd poems of Klabund and others ('What a rotten business! / At the fruitful moment of my parental pair / I was not even there!'). The reader who has no German will be grateful to him for opening up that fascinating and frenzied world, and his appetite will have been whetted for more solid fare.

RAYMOND FURNESS

MANCHESTER

Joseph Roth und völkisch-nationalistische Wertbegriffe: Untersuchungen zur politisch-weltanschaulichen Entwicklung Roths und ihrer Auswirkung auf sein Werk. By WOLF R. MARCHAND. (Bonner Arbeiten zur deutschen Literatur, 23) Bonn: Bouvier. 1974. 386 pp. DM 28 (paperbound).

The subject of this published dissertation is Joseph Roth's political views. Marchand's approach has been determined by his original intention to investigate on what grounds 'Blut und Boden' literature is generally considered bad. In that context, and as a comparison, Joseph Roth was to be taken as an example of a writer who was committed to traditional values and whose literary quality is generally acknowledged. This plan was abandoned, however, when Marchand's investigation into Roth's political development grew into a substantial study in its own right.

The first half of the book is a discussion of Roth's 'politisch-weltanschauliche Entwicklung' from socialism to monarchism, and the second half an analysis of 'Einzelne Begriffe aus dem Wertsystem Roths'. The most controversial aspect of Marchand's book is his argument that Roth, while undoubtedly an active opponent of National Socialism, increasingly drew closer to the reactionary ideas and values of those right-wing extremists he frequently attacked. While no one would question that Roth's conservatism became more pronounced during the course of his life, one wonders what Marchand achieves in pointing out arbitrary parallels between Roth's conservatism and Nazi ideology. A major defect in Marchand's narrowly political standpoint is that he fails to consider the deeper moral values underlying Roth's outlook, which are rooted in Jewish tradition. Particularly in this respect Marchand is at a disadvantage in having written his dissertation before the publication of Roth's letters in 1970 and of the two most significant contributions to Roth scholarship, Claudio Magris's *Lontano da dove: Joseph Roth e la tradizione ebraico-orientale* (Turin, 1971) and David Bronsen's *Joseph Roth: Eine Biographie* (Cologne, 1974).

The validity of Marchand's whole thesis depends very much upon whether one accepts his initial premises. Limited by his own socialist views, Marchand ignores the metaphysical dimension in Roth's outlook that becomes increasingly evident after the journey to Russia in 1926, a dimension that is fundamental to any under-

This content downloaded from 128.6.218.72 on Fri, 29 Jan 2016 12:40:07 UTC
All use subject to JSTOR Terms and Conditions